

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listing of claims in the above-referenced application.

Listing of Claims:

1-13. (Canceled)

14. (Currently Amended) A method of controlling a show comprising:

sending messages between a control panel and a computer system over a primary communication connection to control one or more devices;

monitoring said primary communication connection to determine if said computer system is unavailable for communicating with said control panel; and

in response to determining that said computer system is unavailable, using a backup communication connection to control said one or more devices during said show, wherein said backup communication connection from said control panel is used to control said one or more devices without communicating with said computer system.

15. (Currently Amended) ~~The method of Claim 14,~~ A method of controlling a show comprising:

sending messages between a control panel and a computer system over a primary communication connection to control one or more devices;

monitoring said primary communication connection to determine if said computer system is unavailable for communicating with said control panel; and

in response to determining that said computer system is unavailable, using a backup communication connection to control said one or more devices during said show, wherein said monitoring is performed by said control panel.

16. (Original) The method of Claim 14, wherein said primary communication connection is independent from said backup connection.

17. (Original) The method of Claim 14, wherein said computer system controls at least one of said one or more devices by communicating with a router to which said computer system and said at least one device is connected.

18. (Original) The method of Claim 14, wherein at least one of said one or more devices is directly connected to said computer system.

19. (Original) The method of Claim 17, wherein said control panel is connected to said router using said backup communication connection.

20. (Original) The method of Claim 14, further comprising:
sending a message from said control panel to said computer system in response to a selection on said control panel.

21. (Original) The method of Claim 20, further comprising, in response to receiving said message:

updating state information about said control panel; and

updating system status of a show.

22. (Original) The method of Claim 21, wherein said state information includes at least one of: information local to said control panel, and information affecting a state of multiple control panels.

23. (Currently Amended) ~~The method of Claim 20,~~ A method of controlling a show comprising:

sending messages between a control panel and a computer system over a primary communication connection to control one or more devices;

monitoring said primary communication connection to determine if said computer system is unavailable for communicating with said control panel;

in response to determining that said computer system is unavailable, using a backup communication connection to control said one or more devices during said show;

sending a message from said control panel to said computer system in response to a selection on said control panel; and

in response to receiving said message, updating state information about said control panel, and updating system status of a show, wherein said state information includes at least one of: information local to said control panel, and information affecting a state of multiple control panels, and wherein said multiple control panels include at least one hard control panel and at least one soft control panel having identical functionality.

24. (Currently Amended) ~~The method of Claim 14,~~ A method of controlling a show comprising:

sending messages between a control panel and a computer system over a primary communication connection to control one or more devices;

monitoring said primary communication connection to determine if said computer system is unavailable for communicating with said control panel; and

in response to determining that said computer system is unavailable, using a backup communication connection to control said one or more devices during said show, wherein said sending and said monitoring are performed during a show, and, prior to said sending and said monitoring, a configuration of at least one programmable button on said control panel is defined.

25. (Original) The method of Claim 24, further comprising:

updating a display associated with said at least one programmable button in response to selection of another button of said control panel.

26. (Original) The method of Claim 25, wherein updating said display includes displaying a filename of content associated with said at least one programmable button.

27. (Currently Amended) ~~The method of Claim 14,~~ A method of controlling a show comprising:

sending messages between a control panel and a computer system over a primary communication connection to control one or more devices;

monitoring said primary communication connection to determine if said computer system is unavailable for communicating with said control panel; and

in response to determining that said computer system is unavailable, using a backup communication connection to control said one or more devices during said show, wherein a

transition is made of on-air content from a first source to a second source using an effect indicated on a transition effect button, said transition effect button including a display that varies in accordance with a current selection of one of a plurality a selected effect buttons.

28-31. (Canceled)

32. (Currently Amended) A computer readable memory comprising code stored thereon [[program product]] for controlling a show, the computer readable medium comprising code that:
sends messages between a control panel and a computer system over a primary communication connection to control one or more devices;
monitors said primary communication connection to determine if said computer system is unavailable for communicating with said control panel; and
in response to determining that said computer system is unavailable, uses a backup communication connection to control said one or more devices during said show, wherein said backup communication connection from said control panel is used to control said one or more devices without communicating with said computer system.

33. (Currently Amended) The computer readable memory [[program product]] of Claim 32, wherein said code that monitors is included in said control panel.

34. (Currently Amended) The computer readable memory [[program product]] of Claim 32, wherein said primary communication connection is independent from said backup connection.

35. (Currently Amended) The computer readable memory [[program product]] of Claim 32, wherein said computer system controls at least one of said one or more devices by communicating with a router to which said computer system and said at least one device is connected.

36. (Currently Amended) The computer readable memory [[program product]] of Claim 32, wherein at least one of said one or more devices is directly connected to said computer system.

37. (Currently Amended) The computer readable memory [[program product]] of Claim 35, wherein said control panel is connected to said router using said backup communication connection.

38. (Currently Amended) The computer readable memory [[program product]] of Claim 32, further comprising:

code that sends a message from said control panel to said computer system in response to a selection on said control panel.

39. (Currently Amended) The computer readable memory [[program product]] of Claim 38, further comprising, code that, in response to receiving said message:

updates state information about said control panel; and

updates system status of a show.

40. (Currently Amended) The computer readable memory [[program product]] of Claim 39, wherein said state information includes at least one of: information local to said control panel, and information affecting a state of multiple control panels.

41. (Currently Amended) The computer readable memory [[program product]] of Claim 40 [[38]], wherein said multiple control panels include at least one hard control panel and at least one soft control panel having identical functionality.

42. (Currently Amended) The computer readable memory [[program product]] of Claim 32, further comprising code that defines a configuration of at least one programmable button on said control panel, and wherein said code that defines is executed prior to said code that sends and monitors, said code that sends and monitors being executed during a show.

43. (Currently Amended) The computer readable memory [[program product]] of Claim 42, further comprising:

code that updates a display associated with said at least one programmable button in response to selection of another button of said control panel.

44. (Currently Amended) The computer readable memory [[program product]] of Claim 43, further comprising code that updates said display by displaying a filename of content associated with said at least one programmable button.

45. (Currently Amended) The computer readable memory [[program product]] of Claim 32, wherein a transition is made of on-air content from a first source to a second source using an effect indicated on a transition effect button, said transition effect button including a display that varies in accordance with a current selection of one of a plurality a selected effect buttons.